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SUBJECT: LRA: TALKING POINTS FOR NOVEMBER 17 UNSC
CONSULTATIONS

¶1. (U) This is an action request. USUN should draw from the points in paragraph 4 below for the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) UN Security Council (UNSC) consultations on November 17, with a goal of setting the scene for additional consultations about the upcoming renewal of the MONUC mandate.

¶2. (U) Background: of the three UN missions operating in LRA-affected areas, the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC) is the most affected by LRA actions. MONUC has troops deployed in LRA-affected areas in northeastern DRC and is authorized to provide limited support to the armed forces of the DRC (FARDC) in its operations against the LRA. MONUC's mandate does not give it the explicit authority to support the Ugandan armed forces (UPDF), who are now carrying out the bulk of military activities against the LRA directly.

¶3. (U) The small CAR-based presence of the UN Mission in CAR and Chad (MINURCAT) has a mandate to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and to protect humanitarian actors and UN personnel in eastern Chad and NE CAR. The MINURCAT contingent is based hundreds of miles away from affected areas, and does not have the mandate to address this new threat. The UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) is currently focused on assisting with mandated elections and would need more political direction to help address the LRA threat. The Darfur regions of Sudan and the UN-African Union Mission there (UNAMID), are currently not impacted by LRA activities and are hundreds of miles away from the affected areas. UNAMID faces challenges covering the vast area of Darfur and would require additional assets to counter the LRA. Direct action against the LRA by these missions would require a change in their mandates, although a strengthened role in civilian protection against the LRA is possible under currently mandates. We would suggest that the UNSC discuss at a minimum having more effective coordination and information sharing among the several UN peacekeeping missions regarding the LRA and its impact.

Objectives: Support well-planned operations against LRA, which must establish the proactive protection of civilians as its number one priority, condition MONUC support for FARDC on its respect for human rights, recognize the UN's DDRRR work, encourage the UN to do more, especially regarding child soldier reintegration efforts, and investigate the possibility and practicality of a better-coordinated UN effort to protect civilians against LRA abuses.

¶4. (U) Begin talking points:

Support Plans against the LRA/ Ensure Intra-UN Information Sharing

-- We remain seriously concerned with the LRA's continued presence in northeastern DRC and expansion into the Central African Republic and Southern Sudan, and the resulting attacks on the civilian population across the wider area. While we are encouraged by some positive trends, including

the recent surrender of LRA's eastern commander Charles Arop, we must remain vigilant to make sure gains made against LRA are sustained.

-- We understand that MONUC's efforts mainly focus on information sharing on the FARDC and on protection of civilians in the area of operations.

-- We support this information sharing and encourage MONUC and other peacekeeping missions to establish mechanisms to systematically and routinely share information, as it is critical to increase the protection of civilians.

DDRRR/Child Soldier reintegration:

-- The LRA's tactic of using child soldiers remains one of the most horrific legacies of its reign of terror. The efforts to coordinate child protection, and the return and reintegration of child soldiers, is necessary to help these young victims be able to create a normal life. We wish to recognize the UN's work on DDRRR, which is helping to coordinate repatriation of former combatants and abductees.

-- An increased focus on LRA-affected areas should not take away resources from ongoing MONUC efforts in areas of eastern Congo.

Explore the Merits of an Increased UN Effort:

-- While we note the threat to regional stability posed by the LRA, we are acutely aware of the limitations of the tools the UN has to address this concern. As we begin discussions of MONUC's mandate, and think about the other UN actors in the region, we must take care not to ask the UN, especially MONUC, to do more without also providing it with the resources required. We must also ensure that a coherent UN civilian protection strategy framework, which MONUC continues to develop, governs all activities. Furthermore, MONUC support for FARDC in LRA-affected areas must be rooted in the significant enhancement of information sharing by the FARDC with MONUC, so that MONUC--and other UN actors in the region--can be more able to take proactive steps to protect civilians amid operations against the LRA.

-- In the renewal of UNMIS, mandate this year, the UNSC requested that UNMIS make full use of its mandate on protection with regard to the activities of the LRA. As we debate the upcoming renewal of MONUC's mandate, we would appreciate a report on the extent to which UNMIS has been able to make use of its civilian protection mandate.

Questions:

-- How can the UN increase its cross-mission coordination to address the threat the LRA poses to civilians in several countries?

-- How can we ensure that an increase in resources for LRA-affected areas does not take away MONUC resources or harm MONUC resolve in areas of eastern Congo that are not affected by the LRA, namely in North and South Kivu provinces, where conflict involving other armed groups and militia continues to fuel a humanitarian and human rights crisis?

-- How can we ensure that information sharing by the FARDC with MONUC and the UN in general can be improved to better enable MONUC to take proactive actions to protect civilians?

End talking points.

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